

Tower Hamlets Dessert Policy

As part of the Fantastic Food in Schools, Tower Hamlets will be supporting all primary schools in Tower Hamlets to implement a new policy regarding healthy school desserts. In the interest of promoting the health, well-being and educational outcomes of our students, the policy will focus on offering **fresh fruit; low or no sugar yoghurt; and cheese with unsweetened crackers** as dessert options.

Examples of desserts that conform with the new policy:

- Fruit salad
- Cut pieces of fruit
- Plain yogurt (with or without fruit puree, made from fruits, or unsweetened oats)
- Fruit yogurt with less than 5% sugar
- Cheese with unsweetened crackers/breadsticks

Examples of desserts that do not conform with the new policy:

- Cakes, biscuits, ice-cream
- Fruit smoothies or yoghurt-based drinks
- Baked fruit
- Fruit-based desserts (e.g. apple crumble, 50/50 cakes)
- Yogurt with over 5% sugar
- Cheese-based baked goods (e.g. cheese straws)

Theme days

We understand that food is part of celebrations for specific religious and cultural days. During celebrations, schools are encouraged to use decorations and the main (savoury) part of the school meal to make the day feel special. To ensure the school meal continues to maximise the nutritional intake of children, this policy allows no more than 2 non-compliant desserts per term, as part of theme days.

Rationale for new policy

This decision reflects our commitment to combat high levels of dental decay and excess weight in Tower Hamlets, and to support children to develop healthy eating habits from an early age. We believe that by encouraging nutritious choices, we can contribute to the long-term health and success of our children and improved behavioural and educational outcomes in the long term.

We are committed to working closely with schools and caterers to explore cost-effective options and ensure that the school meal in Tower Hamlets is appropriately funded with support to ensure high uptake. We have worked closely with our own contract caterer to develop menus that reflect this policy.

The Fantastic Food in Schools programme has resources and offers individual school support in implementing a whole school approach to improving the school food environment. It is important to engage the whole school community when making these changes and creating a healthier school food environment for Tower Hamlet's students.